

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



Weaving Bonds Across Borders (WBAB)

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OUR MISSION

Weaving Bonds Across Borders (WBAB) is a women-led network that is building the power and leadership of youth from grassroots communities to work together for peace, women's rights, and environmental justice.

We promote leadership from and exchange between the grassroots and Global South through training, peacebuilding, and support for youth and community-led actions.

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VIETNAM

WATER GOVERNANCE AND GENDER EQUALITY

Weaving Bonds Across Borders supported 17 women and 18 men (including Weaving Bonds staff and alumni) participated in Water Use Gender and Workshop in Cao Lanh city for 3 days on January 18th to 21st, 2018. Being a part of Long Xuyen Quadrant, Cao Lanh city – Dong Thap province is abundant with water and annual high-level flooding. The local environmental conditions are suitable for fishery, non-timber forest products (lotus, lily, hyacinth, etc), and making handicraft products from those plants. Moreover, this area is popular for eco-tourism with 2 well-known Ramsar

areas as Tram Chim National Park and Tram Tra Su National Park. The workshop was held for 2 days in Cao Lanh City and a half-day field trip in communities nearby Tram Chim National Park. Our alumni and staff learned environmental issues and women's rights and were given tools and information to protect and promote women's empowerment. Moreover, they also learned fundamental knowledge of the Mekong River, Mekong dams, and water use initiatives to preserve water resources.

GENDER APPROACHES IN PROJECT DESIGN

The main message of the Water Use and Gender Workshop is to provide participants the rationale of gender engagement in the project cycle, from the designing stage to project evaluation stage. The first stage is a general approach to gender issues. The second stage is a gender perspective approaches in conducting research. The last stage is to come out with solutions for issues in the Mekong Delta. The workshop

reminded us that to make all projects effective, inclusive voices of vulnerable groups such as women, children, disabilities, indigenous people, etc. are the most important. Our alumni and staff got skills sessions in communication and project design, participants learned how to design and implement

training in their communities on gender and water issues, and also learned project cycle management skills. The trainers from Vietnam shared their



Figure 1 Water Use Gender and Workshop in Cao Lanh city, Vietnam

experiences on gender inequality. For instance, men own more properties than women, men likely have more education than women, and men have more opportunities at school and at work. Specifically, at a young age, women students in the Mekong Delta were forced to stop studying more than men students. The role of women in the family is devalued and their need to do 'double works' without taking salaries, so women become more vulnerable to human trafficking and forced foreign marriages.



Figure 2 Water Use Gender and Workshop in Cao Lanh city, Vietnam

ALUMNI PROGRAM AND ALUMNI-LED ACTION

Weaving Bonds continued to support its alumni from marginalized communities to participate in forums/workshops and small grant programs. Through our alumni program, we continued to motivate and support youths to spread out their knowledge to their communities.

FORUMS AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP

MEDIA AND STORYTELLING SKILL

Weaving Bonds Across Borders' alumni Htoi Nan from Kachin state, Myanmar. Her community is located in the war zone of Kachin State. She wanted to work on social justice by improving her writing skills on narrative stories. Therefore, we encouraged Htoi Nan to attend Oxfam's workshop "Media and Storytelling skill" on October 16th to 18th, 2018, and she was accepted by the Oxfam IP team.

Apart from learning how to write a good and powerful story to do advocacy work, Htoi Nan also had a chance to visit local communities and practiced her interview skills and made a story on women's leadership. After this workshop, Htoi Nan reported that she had an inspiration to continually work with women issues in Kachin State and will document women's stories related to gender inequality and women's rights to access to natural resources.

ASIA PACIFIC FEMINIST FORUM

Weaving Bonds Across Borders also provided opportunities for its staff and one intern to join forums and workshops. From September 7th to 9th, 2018 one intern and two staffs joined in the “Asia Pacific Feminist Forum organized by the Asia Pacific Women, Law and Development (APWLD). In this

forum, the staffs got a chance to talk to donors and expand its networks among the Asia Pacific feminists. The staff also get to learn organization development under a feminist approach and security knowledge for human rights defenders and women's rights for natural resource management at the regional level.

MEKONG YOUTH ASSEMBLY WORKSHOP

On October 13th – 15th, 2018, Weaving Bonds' staff joined the Mekong Youth Assembly Workshop in Chiangmai, Thailand. The workshop was organized by the Mekong Youth Assembly (MYA). The objectives are to train Salween youth network participants in understanding how to do research, and to discuss and brainstorm the issues of the



Figure 4 Mekong Youth Assembly Workshop in Chiangmai, Thailand



Figure 3 Mekong Youth Assembly Workshop in Chiangmai, Thailand

Salween River. Our staff had increased the understanding of the effects of Salween dams on people around the area, especially minority peoples who do not have Thai nationality.

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

From April 2017 to August 2018, Weaving Bonds has been working on regional alumni small grants and we have funded two small projects from our regional alumni. One alumna from Nepal and another one from Indonesia. They both organized workshops on gender issues in their communities and improved women's awareness of gender equality. In this activity, two alumni proposed and implemented their own community activities in which they both were able to apply their gender knowledge that they learned from the 2017 regional workshop. After this activity, two alumni reported that they had gained direct working experiences with communities

and the trust from their communities. According to the activities that they organized, they also got to improve their leadership skills and also got to learn on how to play the roles as project manager among the community members.

ADVOCACY ON GENDER IN NEPAL

Weaving Bonds Across Borders' alumni Bindu from Nepal got our small grant to do a community workshop on gender awareness in her community on 7th April 2018. Bindu found that there are different types of gender inequalities in Nepalese society, but women do not have much knowledge on gender inequality. Therefore, she organized a one day's workshop for 23 local women



Figure 5 Samll grant activity in Nepal



Figure 6 Samll grant activity in Nepal

and 11 women students, the women aged from 14 years to 70 years old. (41 women in total). In this workshop, local women and students got to learn a basic knowledge of gender and sex, the differences between gender equity and gender equality, gender empowerment, women's leadership and a different situation of women in different parts of Nepal.

"I wanted to do this kind of community project many years ago. In my village, local people could not have this kind of workshop, because my village is located in a remote area. If we need to go to our village from the city, we have to travel the whole night and after that, we have to walk for 5 to 6 hrs. to reach my village. People in my village are still in the shadows so they don't know what is going on outside. So, this is my dream to conduct this kind of workshop in my village and improve their awareness of gender equality. I'd got more confidence from this project because local women motivated me to run this type of program again in the future (Bindu 2018)."

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN INDONESIA



Figure 7 Small grant in Indonesia

One of Weaving Bonds Across Borders' alumni, Wening who is from Indonesia got our small grant to organize a community workshop on women's leadership in her community. Wening invited 30 women to join her workshop

"I am very inspired by the experiences and spirits of the participants who followed this project. I shared my own experiences and learned much from the participants. In addition, I also have gained experiences and knowledge about the religious community where I visited. This is my first experience leading the project from the beginning to the end. This experience is very valuable and improved my confidence in developing my leadership skill (Wening 2018)."

who are religious people, teachers, and students. In Indonesia, women cannot be religious leaders, so Wening's workshop focuses on religion. This project increased experiences and knowledge of women in understanding other religious groups such as the society where men are religious leaders. In addition, this activity increased the insight of women in understanding the dynamics of religion and culture in the society so that women can play a role in managing the diversity of their neighborhood, from family level to society. The program consists of 5 activities conducted in 5 religious' communities.

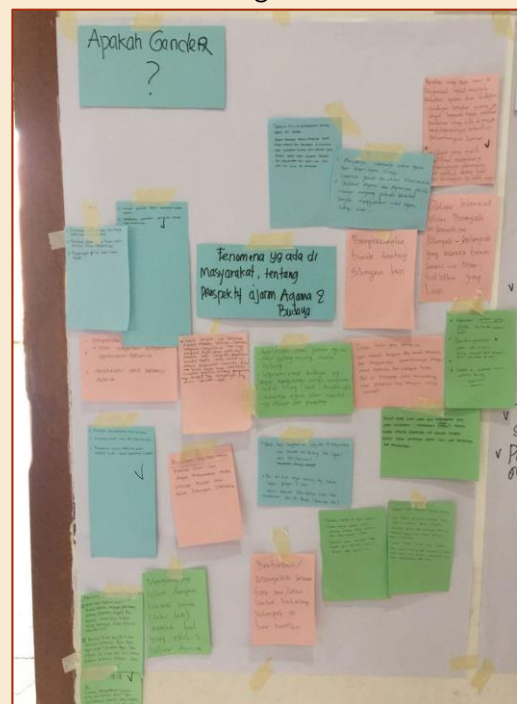


Figure 8 Small grant in Indonesia

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT

Weaving Bonds Across Borders improved its organizational policies such as disability of people, gender equality, and child rights with Weaving Bonds board members and Oxfam IP team, had hired grant writers to work on the grant proposals. Weaving Bonds grant writers are Ms. Thien (hired 8 months) and Ms. Hannah (3 months) from 2017 to 2018 submitted the proposals to International Rivers, Open Meadow, Asia Foundation, Mama Cash, US embassy, Lush Foundation and Tharthi Myay Foundation's Fast Fund). In addition, we also got grants from International Rivers, Open Meadow, Asia Foundation, and Tharthi Myay Foundation.

On August 27th - 28th, 2018, Weaving Bonds staff, Hseng, and Noom, attended Training on Disability Inclusion in the Water Governance Program at Foundation for Culture and Environment Southeast Asia Chiang Mai, Thailand, supported by Oxfam. This workshop increased our staff's knowledge of people with disabilities. Moreover, we had our new policy on the disability of people where our staff learned how to organize an inclusive workshop for disabled



Figure 9 Disability Inclusion in the Water Governance training, Chiangmai, Thailand

people in the future. The workshop also gained an understanding of disability issues in the region and challenges in accessing services for persons with disabilities and understanding the difference between mainstreaming and disability-specific initiatives and when each should apply.

Weaving Bonds staff also had a chance to extend its network with Mekong Delta Youth Group in Vietnam. Weaving Bonds grant writer and communication coordinator Ms.Thien and Alumni Coordinator Tzarm Noon joined the network activity and gender in water governance workshop with Mekong Delta Youth Group, Weaving Bonds also had a chance to work closely with donor organizations such as International Rivers, who provided us the great support and valuable suggestions to sustain our future projects.

FINANCIAL REPORT

2018 Revenue	Amount in USD
Individuals and community donations	13,217
Foundation Grants (Oxfam, Open Meadow Foundation, International Rivers, Tharhi Myay Foundation)	42,935
Total Revenue	56,152
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2018 Expenditure	Amount in USD
Program expenses	17,912
Staffing cost	16,963
Overhead and Emergency Fund	131
Total Program Expenses	35,006
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Balance on Hand (as of 31 Dec 2018)	21,146
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APPRECIATIONS

Our deepest thanks go to the following individuals and organizations who have supported our work with financial support, advice, efforts and/or partnership in 2018

- Oxfam
- Open Meadow
- International Rivers
- Tharthi Myay Foundation
- Asia Pacific Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
- WBAB network in Vietnam
- WBAB alumni
- Mekong Youth Journey
- Mekong Alumni Network
- EarthRights International
- Mekong Youth Assembly
- Mekong Delta Youth Group
- Mong Pan Youth Association (Myanmar)

FRIENDS AND NETWORK

To those of you who have supported our work with contributions of your efforts, including our trainers, resource persons, advisors and others that are unnamed on the lists, but we deeply appreciate your heartfelt contributions of your time and energy. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your support and commitment to work together for a better world. To support our work or become a monthly donor, please contact us or visit

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